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SUBJECT: MEDVEDEV SPEECH AND FOREIGN POLICY PAPER HIGHLIGHT
RUSSIAN GOALS AND CONCERNS

REF: A. MOSCOW 2012

[B](#). MOSCOW 229

[1](#)1. Summary: Medvedev's July 15 address to Russian diplomats and the release by the Presidential Administration of an official concept paper laid out Russian policy goals and concerns without breaking new ground (ref A). The paper covered in detail many of the same themes Medvedev made in his speech, including Russia's call for Europe to move beyond divisions created by a Cold War-era security structure and genuinely unite through "equal interaction" by Russia, the EU and U.S. Both Medvedev and the paper criticized those that chose to selectively interpret history to blame Russia for events that occurred during WWII and the postwar period. The concept paper went beyond the speech to say that the GOR would protect Russians in other countries and promote Russian language and culture, and highlighted the GOR goal to positively influence international media. In the part of the speech that was not public, Medvedev reportedly directed Russian diplomats to more forcefully protect Russian interests and respond to criticism of GOR policy, leading one diplomat to predict a shake-up within the MFA. The Russian press viewed the speech and paper as demonstrating that Russia would stick to the principles of Putin's foreign policy, although one commentator noted that whereas the previous concept paper issued in 2000 called for a multipolar system to replace a U.S.-dominated, unipolar world, the 2008 paper assumed that the multipolar world had already arrived. End summary.

Move Beyond NATO

[1](#)2. Russian concern that NATO propagated the artificial division of Europe was a major theme of both Medvedev's July speech and the concept paper issued shortly after the address to an assembly of Russian diplomats. Medvedev said that with the end of the Cold War there was no longer a need for "bloc-based policy and bloc discipline," nor for "paternalism" in which one country dictated to other states. What was needed instead was a collective security system "open to all." The paper offered an oblique critique of NATO, which was a manifestation of the "lingering political and psychological" need of some to deter Russia. Such "traditional, bulky political-military unions" were inadequate to meeting contemporary challenges that required "diplomacy based on flexible participation in multilateral structures."

[1](#)3. The concept paper called for ensuring "greater stability and predictability" in Russia-U.S. relations. Both needed to move beyond historical "barriers" and build a contemporary partnership that took into account the "huge potential for mutually advantageous bilateral cooperation" while also recognizing that such a partnership would have great influence in international affairs.

Opposition to NATO Expansion

¶4. On NATO expansion, the concept paper criticized "limited and selective" integration processes that further divided Europe at a time when a new approach was necessary to confront modern challenges. Russia would, however, continue to cooperate with NATO, although future relations would depend upon whether NATO treated Russia as an equal partner and complied with the commitment made through the NATO-Russia Council not to secure NATO's safety at the expense of Russia's.

Russia Calls for European Unity

¶5. The concept paper called for a genuinely united Europe without dividing lines, achieved through the "equal integration" of Russia, the EU and U.S. Achieving this required an "open, democratic system of regional collective security and cooperation" without the "bloc approach" that emerged during the Cold War and continued today. Russia would seek a "long-term strategic partnership" with the EU, including formal "mechanisms of interaction" in the areas of security, political, economic, and social policy. The concept paper also called for further development of bilateral relations with a list of European countries that the press noted were major consumers of Russian gas.

Emphasis on Soft Power

¶6. Expanding Russia's ability to influence the foreign media

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and provide information was a highlight of the concept paper not covered in Medvedev's speech. The paper said the GOR would develop the ability to provide the "international public...full and precise information about the Russian attitude to key international problems," as well as internal Russian developments and cultural and scientific achievements. The GOR would do so by supporting Russian media internationally, as well as by responding to information "threats to national sovereignty and security. Russia would also finance "foreign political events," an undefined term that may refer to efforts such as the new GOR financed Institute for Democracy and Cooperation, a policy organization with offices in Paris and New York (ref B).

Do Not Reinterpret History

¶7. GOR concern with the situation of Russian citizens and Russian-speakers in former Soviet states was a focus of both Medvedev's speech and the concept paper, which said a Russian priority was "comprehensively protecting the rights and legitimate interests of Russian citizens and compatriots living abroad." The GOR would also expand its cultural outreach by "popularizing the Russian language and culture of Russia's peoples in foreign countries." The paper echoed Medvedev's complaint about countries selectively interpreting WWII and the postwar period, calling instead for a "common vision of modern history." Medvedev continued this theme when he told the press after the speech that it was "immoral" to blame Russia for the Golodomor, the Soviet-era famine brought on by collectivization that killed millions. Medvedev said that the tragedy was "our common grief" and to single out Russia was politically motivated.

Medvedev Calls for More Action by Diplomats

¶8. During a closed-door part of the speech, the press reported that Medvedev took Russian diplomats to task for failing to aggressively pursue Russian interests and effectively rebuff criticism of Russia. Medvedev reportedly

pointed to North Korea, where the Russian Embassy had not been invited to witness the destruction of the Yongbyon reactor, as an example. Russian Ambassador to NATO Rogozin told the press he predicted a MFA shakeup because the "old school" among Russian diplomats was "not ready" to take on the task Medvedev expected. A prominent analyst told us that by criticizing Russian diplomats, Medvedev reserved for himself an opportunity to make future changes within the MFA. Medvedev also proposed new legislation to improve the living and working situation of diplomats overseas.

Continuity in a Multipolar World

19. RIA Novosti contrasted the new concept paper, which laid out a positive approach to forming an international system not reliant on Cold War security mechanisms, with its predecessor from 2000, a time when Russia was still smarting over the NATO bombing of Serbia and railing against the so-called unipolar world. Kommersant noted that the 2000 document said Russia would "press for a multipolar system of international relations," whereas the current document assumed this result has already occurred. Medvedev picked up on this theme in his speech, telling the diplomats that Russia had the ability to address regional and global challenges.

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